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The Olive Percival
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Children's Books

THE

TWO COUSINS;

A

MORAL STORY.

Mary Thomson discovered asleep in the Snow by Mrs Leyster & her Daughter.

THE

TWO COUSINS,

A

MORAL STORY,

FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

IN WHICH IS EXEMPLIFIED

THE NECESSITY OF MODERATION AND JUSTICE TO THE ATTAINMENT OF HAPPINESS.

By the AUTHOR of THE BLIND CHILD AND DRAMATIC DIALOGUES.

When man has caſt off his ambitious greatneſs,
And ſunk into the ſweetneſs of himſelf,
Not great but good deſires his daily ſervants,
How quietly he ſleeps, how joyfully
He wakes again, and looks on his poſſeſſions!
——————— Smell to this flower,
Can all the perfumes of the empire paſs this?
The carefulleſt lady's cheek ſhew ſuch a colour?
They are gilded and adulterate vanities,
And here in poverty lives noble *nature!*

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

LONDON:

Printed for E. NEWBERY, at the corner of St. Paul's Church-yard.

M DCC XCVIII.

[*Entered at Stationers Hall.*]

ADDRESS

TO THE

PUBLIC.

GRATIFIED as I am by the ſucceſs which has attended my two former works, I do not with the leſs diffidence ſubmit this to the judgment of the Public. On the *execution* of this little work I am unable to determine, but upon the

intention

intention my heart pronounces an unequivocal ſentence. Perhaps then I am not too bold in believing, that a love of virtue, of juſtice and religion, may be traced in the following pages; and no hope can be ſweeter to my heart, than that they may ultimately impreſs a ſimilar adoration of thoſe great principles on the minds of the riſing generation. That author who, in the preſent age, exerts herſelf to the utmoſt of her power againſt the inroads of luxury, of injuſtice, of a diſregard to the laws

of

of her country and religion, however slight the effect of her exertions may be, has surely not lived entirely in vain.

THE

TWO COUSINS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT a mile from a pretty town in Hampſhire, lived Mrs. Leyſter, a widow, and ſtill a young woman, with her only daughter Conſtantia, who was at the time theſe anecdotes begin near eleven years of age. The houſe in which they lived was a ſmall white building, with a lawn before, parted from harveſt fields by a ſunk fence, and commanding a fine extent of country. Behind the houſe, and on the north ſide, was a

little ſhrubberry ſurrounded by a green wire fence, and on the ſouth ſide the walled kitchen garden; ſo that the houſe being open only to the weſt, was ſheltered from the cold winds, and conſequently extremely warm and comfortable. A ſmall village was ſituated at a very ſhort diſtance from this pleaſant reſidence; it was entirely occupied by induſtrious poor, who always found a friend in time of neceſſity at Fair-Lawn, for ſo Mrs. Leyſter's houſe was called. Conſtantia was, as the following pages will prove, a little girl of an amiable diſpoſition; ſhe had very good ſenſe, an even temper, and a kind affectionate heart, ſo that ſhe repaid as far as poſſible the unremitting care and attention of her mother. I ſay as far as poſſible, becauſe it

is

is only by a whole life of duty and virtue that a child can repay a tender mother the debt which it begins to incur at the moment of its birth. The anxiety which fills the heart of a mother while a child is in the ſtate of infancy, her watchful nights, her days of fear and caution, a child cannot even imagine; and when this infant ſo anxiouſly guarded becomes older, do the mother's cares leſſen?—on the contrary they encreaſe, the heedleſſneſs of youth continually awakens them, a blow, a fall, an accident of any kind gives to the heart of a mother an exquiſite pang. But ah! if ſhe ſees, or believes ſhe ſees the leaſt tendency towards peeviſhneſs, want of feeling or obſtinacy, then indeed her uneaſineſs becomes inſupportable; ſhe imagines all her cares

are uſeleſs, and the only hope of her life departing from her. Pardon this digreſſion, my young friends, in conſideration of its conſequence, and think as you read it how carefully you ought to avoid as much as poſſible giving pain to the hearts of your parents. Conſtantia indeed knew not the extent of her obligations to her mother, but ſhe knew enough to convince her that ſhe could never repay them; ſhe ſtudied therefore in every thing to be mild, tractable and obliging; ſhe gave all her attention to thoſe leſſons her mother wiſhed her to learn, and in general was ſucceſsful. Mrs. Leyſter taught her to read, work and write, and alſo the firſt principles of drawing: a dancing maſter came twice, and a French maſter three times a week to give her leſſons,

leſſons. Muſic made no part of her plan, for as Conſtantia's fortune would not be large, Mrs. Leyſter conſidered an accompliſhment which requires ſo much time an unneceſſary one. Conſtantia however had a ſweet, delicate voice, and a good ear, and Mrs Leyſter, who had conſiderable knowledge of muſic, took pleaſure in directing both, ſo that before Conſtantia was ten years old, ſhe could ſing ſeveral ſongs pretily and agreeably. In theſe pleaſing and various amuſements the days paſſed on, when one morning in the winter, which completed Conſtantia's eleventh year, after a heavy fall of ſnow which remained the depth of ſome feet on the ground, the ſun ſhone out very bright, and the froſt was ſo hard that Mrs. Leyſter imagined a walk in the

ſhrubbery might not be unpleaſant. The trees hanging over had prevented the ſnow from covering the walks, and Conſtantia, who had been confined ſome days by the weather, gladly prepared to accompany her mother. She ran ſometimes before her, ſometimes in another walk, with all the joy of a young bird who has juſt learned the uſe of his wings; while Mrs. Leyſter walked quickly on to keep herſelf warm, and admired the beautiful winter piece which met her view, the ſnow ſparkling in the ſun, the long icicles which hung from the trees, the branches covered with froſt work, were all agreeable to her eyes. Conſtantia at laſt came running to her mother, and taking her by the hand, ſaid, "Now, mama, I will walk with you."

MRS. LEYSTER.

Do ſo, my dear, if you like it. You have warmed yourſelf, have you not?

CONSTANCE.

Oh yes, mama!—It is charming to run, how dearly I love to come out of doors!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Eſpecially after being ſhut up for two or three days!

CONSTANCE.

Yes indeed!—I fancied while I ſat by the fire the cold much greater than it is, and let me ſit ever ſo cloſe I could not be warm; but now I am quite in a glow—dear mama, I wiſh you would run too!

MRS. LEYSTER, *(Laughing.)*

Conſider, Conſtance, I have more weight to carry than you, and of courſe

the exercise of walking pretty quickly warms me as much as you are warmed by running.

CONSTANCE.

Mama, how glad I shall be when Spring comes, and the flowers!—My bed of Hyacinths will be beautiful!—Oh, I wish they were come, I wish it was Spring!

MRS. LEYSTER.

But then, Constantia, it will be so warm, I shall not suffer you to run; and besides, our charming long evenings, you will lose them!

CONSTANCE.

Ah, our evenings! How sorry I shall be! It is so comfortable to sit by the fire

fire with the curtains down and work! And then, mama, you are always ſo chearful in a winter evening; you read to me ſuch charming ſtories, and you are ſo good as to ſup an hour ſooner, that I may ſup with you!—Ah, I ſhall be ſorry when winter is gone!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yet you juſt now wiſhed for Spring! Thus you ſee, my child, every ſeaſon is charming if we are diſpoſed to be pleaſed with it, and to put ourſelves in the way of taſting its charms. Do you ſuppoſe your couſin in London enjoys the different ſeaſons as much as you do?

CONSTANCE.

No indeed, mama, for you tell me they have no flowers in London, ſo ſhe

cannot enjoy the Spring as I do.—Ah, but I had forgot, they leave London in the Spring and Summer!

MRS. LEYSTER.

They do ſo, but are they better ſituated? They go to the ſea-ſide, not to enjoy the view of the ocean, or the beauties that ſurround it, but to mingle with the ſame crowd in which they have lived all the winter, and paſs the fine evenings of Summer in crowded rooms, from which the mild twilight and the bright moon are excluded, and their place ill ſupplied by wax-lights reflected from mirrors and diamonds.

CONSTANCE.

True, mama, but at leaſt in the winter.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

In the Winter they lead the ſame kind of life; and as in the Summer they faint with heat, ſo in the Winter they tremble with cold, which all their carpets and furs cannot exclude, ſince they take no exerciſe to render them proof againſt it. I have tried this life, and found how little real pleaſure is to be derived from it, ſo that I willingly exchange it for that I lead at preſent.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, poor Alicia!—I pity her—don't you think, mama, ſhe would like to come hither in the Summer?

MRS. LEYSTER.

No, my dear, although ſhe is but thirteen, ſhe has been introduced by a

miſtaken indulgence into company; ſhe has acquired a reliſh for diſſipation, and loſt that deſire which young people naturally have for the charms and liberty of the country. But my dear Conſtantia, I think we ſhall be able to go under the hedges to the village; 'tis ſome time ſince we ſaw the poor people, and perhaps in this ſevere weather they may want ſomething.

CONSTANCE.

Yes, indeed—I want ſadly to know how poor Dame Burden's rheumatiſm is—I am a afraid the cold will make her worſe. They then walked on a quick pace, ſtill converſing with great cheerfulneſs, when they were ſtartled by the howling of a dog, who was concealed by the

the winding of the hedge from their eyes—but in a minute, as if at hearing their voices, he came running towards them, wagging his tail and whining in the moſt expreſſive manner, ſeemingly to intreat their aſſiſtance.—" Poor fellow, poor fellow!" ſaid Conſtantia. The dog then jumped up and again whined, then ran a little way forward, then ſtood ſtill looking at them, and again whined. " What does this mean," ſaid Mrs. Leyſter, this dog ſeems to implore our aſſiſtance; they are very ſagacious, let us follow him."—At that inſtant they heard the faint cry of an infant, and the dog ſprung out of their ſight, howling moſt piteouſly. " What is this!"—ſaid Mrs. Leyſter, " I heard the cry of a child—good Heavens, perhaps—Let us haſten." Conſtantia

ſtantia quitting her mother's hand now ran lightly on, while Mrs. Leyſter followed, as faſt as the ſnow and her agition would let her; but before ſhe had turned the corner of the hedge, Conſtantia out of breath, with her cheeks the colour of crimſon, ran back exclaiming—"mama, mama!—Make haſte, oh, make haſte—a woman! a poor little infant!"

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

AT theſe words Mrs. Leyſter redoubled her ſpeed, and in two minutes arrived at the place where the dog ſtood howling over the apparently dead body of a woman, in whoſe arms lay a bundle wrapped in a long cloth cloak. As Mrs. Leyſter advanced, ſhe diſcovered that this bundle was a young child, whoſe faint cries ſeemed to deplore the loſs of that nouriſhment it could no longer draw from the breaſt of its mother. "Unhappy woman!" ſaid Mrs Leyſter, "I fear ſhe is frozen to death!—Good Heaven,

ven, what must she have suffered during the inclemency of last night!

CONSTANCE.

Frozen, mama!—Oh, how dreadful! Poor little baby, how it cries—Hush, poor child!—mama, what shall we do?

MRS. LEYSTER, *(shedding tears.)*

See, Constantia, how carefully the poor creature has wrapped up her infant, so that it seems not to have received the least injury—poor little dear, how nice and clean it is, and the woman is decently dressed—Run, my child, as fast as possible, to the house; send Martha and Thomas up hither, and bid them bring some brandy, some blankets and a chair

chair—Make what haſte you can, but be careful not to fall down.

Conſtantia haſtened away, and in about a quarter of an hour returned, followed by the ſervants with the things Mrs. Leyſter had ordered: in the mean time ſhe had not been idle, ſhe had employed all the means ſhe could think of to recover the poor woman, and fancied ſhe could perceive a faint motion of the heart, and other ſlight ſigns of life. The poor creature was quickly placed in the chair, and carefully conveyed to the houſe by the wondering ſervants, while Mrs. Leyſter followed carrying the baby. As ſoon as they entered the houſe, they would have carried the poor woman to the fire, under a notion of thawing her frozen

frozen limbs, but this Mrs. Leyſter forbade.

CONSTANCE.

Not carry her to the fire, mama! Will that not recover her ſooner than any thing?

MRS. LEYSTER.

On the contrary, my dear, it will cauſe her frozen limbs to mortify directly.—I have already rubbed her hands and feet with ſnow, an application which muſt be continued.

CONSTANCE.

Rubbed them with ſnow, mama?—

MRS. LEYSTER

Yes, that is the ſafeſt means of recovering her—My dear Conſtance, ſend Thomas

Thomas for Mr. Horland the Surgeon, and desire he will come directly.

The woman was then put to bed, and in less than half an hour strong signs of life appeared, which continued to increase till the arrival of the Surgeon, who approved of all that had been done, and used other remedies which had the desired effect, for in a short time she opened her eyes and faintly exclaimed, "Jenny!—Oh, my dear baby!"—This exclamation affected Mrs. Leyster to tears; they flowed some time, and relieved her heart from the agitation which oppressed it since she found this poor creature. The dog who had found his way into the bed-chamber, now jumped up, and licked his mistress's hands; she seemed to recol-

lect

lect him, and said in a low voice, " poor Rover!"—then added, " Jenny, where is my poor Jenny!"—Mrs. Leyster now took the infant from the arms of her servant, where, after being fed, it had fallen into a sweet sleep, and put it into the bed; the poor woman again opened her eyes, looked at the baby, and said, " what, asleep my child?—*You* are not cold—thank God you are alive!"—She then looked wildly about her, exclaiming, " Oh, where am I?—I thought I was in the snow—and so cold—I dreamed it!—But what room is this, who are all these?"—Mrs Leyster then motioned for every body to keep out of sight, and kneeling by the bed-side, said, " my good woman, be composed, you are with friends, and very safe, you have been

been ill, but try to sleep, and you will soon be well again!—"My head," said the poor creature, putting her hand to it, "is so bad, I cannot recollect any thing—But my child is here, and we are not in the snow—poor Rover, *you* are here too!" Mrs Leyster then drew the curtains, and went to the farther end of the room; she sent away every body but Constantia, and sat down with her to watch the event. The poor woman was soon asleep, and the dog laying down by her side slept also. When Mrs. Leyster was convinced that her patient was asleep, she with Constance left the room, and sent Martha to sit there while they dined. The whole of that day the poor woman passed in a sort of dozing insensibility, though she gradually amended, and by the

next

next morning was able to riſe for a few hours, and to underſtand by what means ſhe had been brought thither. Her gratitude to Mrs. Leyſter and all her family was unbounded and inexpreſſible; ſhe could only ſhed tears, utter broken ſentences, and preſs her child to her boſom, while ſhe lifted up her eyes to Heaven in thankfulneſs for its preſervation, and to call down bleſſings on her benefactors—then turning them on Mrs. Leyſter, ſhe would ſay—"Oh, Madam!—my child—*you* have ſaved her!—May God reward you by bleſſing yours!" The force of this bleſſing Mrs. Leyſter fully felt—none could ſtrike upon her heart with ſo much power as that which had her daughter for its object! In a few days the woman, whoſe name was underſtood

to

to be Thomſon, was perfectly recovered; ſhe eargerly ſtrove to aſſiſt the ſervants in doing every thing they would ſuffer her to have a hand in, and about the fifth day after that in which ſhe had been found, ſhe ſent to beg leave to ſpeak with Mrs. Leyſter, a requeſt which was immediately granted, and ſhe came into the parlour with her child in her arms, curtſying and with tears in her eyes. Conſtantia, who was grown very fond of the child, took it in her arms, while the following dialogue paſſed.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Come in, Mrs. Thomſon, I am told you have ſomething to ſay to me—Sit down, Mrs. Thomſon—Thank you, Madam, I will ſtand if you pleaſe.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

No, no, ſit down, you are weak ſtill.

MARY THOMSON.

Ah, Madam, how good you are! I can never thank you as I ought to do!—I dont know how to ſpeak—but my heart *(putting her hand to it with great emotion)* Oh, Madam, my heart is ſo full I cannot bear it!

MRS. LEYSTER, (*affected.*)

But this is not what you had to ſay to me!

MARY THOMPSON.

No, Madam, I dont know how to ſpeak it, but I muſt not burthen you any longer—God knows, " I was a ſtranger and you took me in!" but I will not encroach

encroach upon your charity; I have no right to do it, I can never repay what you have done for me already!

MRS. LEYSTER.

You have been too ill hitherto to inform me who you are, or whither you were going; will you tell me now?

MARY THOMSON.

Yes, surely, madam, since you are so kind as to ask it:—my name is Mary Thomson, and I am a widow, my husband has been dead only five months!

MRS. LEYSTER.

What employment was he?

MARY THOMSON.

Madam, he was a journeyman carpenter; we had been married four years,

and went on pretty well. I had one child before this you see here, but it died. My husband was very industrious, but though we were poor, we never had occasion to ask any thing of any body; besides, a good lady that I had lived servant with many years stood godmother to my first child, and was very kind to us indeed; but just before my little Jenny was born, this Lady died; she left me five guineas—but alas! madam, just after that my husband fell from a scaffold and broke his arm. Then, madam, we both suffered indeed, he with pain, and I to see him. My five guineas was soon expended, he could not work, and every thing went heavily with us!

MRS. LEYSTER, *(wiping her eyes.)* Poor creature—you are too much affected

fected—I will hear the reſt another time.

MARY THOMSON.

No Ma'am, if you pleaſe I will tell you now;—I have thought of theſe things ſo often, and ſhed ſo many tears, that I don't ſeem to mind it ſo much now. —My huſband, ma'am, was ſo weakened by the pain he went through, that being always ſlight, it threw him into a conſumption, of which he died at the end of four months, and left me without money or friends; all my little furniture was gone to keep him in his illneſs; the pariſh were forced to bury him, and to allow me ſomething, little enough, but ſufficient with my own hard work to keep us alive.

MRS. LEYSTER.

And what cauſed you to leave this place in which you lived?

MARY THOMSON.

Why, madam, I have a ſiſter at Portſmouth; ſhe wrote me word if I and my child would come to her, ſhe could put me in a little ſhop with her huſband's aunt, who would be glad to have me, as I could write and keep a book; ſo, madam, I ſold what little I had, and came on about twenty miles to a relation's, where my ſiſter was to meet me; but there, madam, inſtead of my ſiſter, I found a letter, telling me, the perſon I was to have been in buſineſs with had died ſuddenly, and as my ſiſter had no

m ans

means to provide for me, ſhe adviſed me to go back to my Pariſh. I was fain to take her advice, and was going back very ſad on foot, when the ſnow came on juſt before night; I was bewildered and loſt my way, and at laſt, tired out I ſat down, intending to reſt a few minutes, and wrapped up my child as warm as I could in my own cloak, when I found myſelf exceeding cold, and then ſo very ſleepy, that I could not keep awake; ſo I lay down for a minute, and from that time only remember feeling cold and ſleepy till I found myſelf in this houſe, and more kindly treated than ever poor creature was before!

MRS. LEYSTER.

We muſt have been inhuman not to have done what we did.

MARY THOMSON.

Oh, madam, how few people would have done ſo! To wait on me your own ſelves, to ſpeak ſo kindly to me, and to take ſuch care of my poor baby—Oh, I can never, never tell you half I feel!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Well, well, I muſt have no more of this; your ſtory affects me greatly; do you wiſh to return to your pariſh?

MARY THOMSON.

Ah, no, madam, if I could do any thing elſe: I ſhall be worſe off there than ever, for I have ſpent almoſt every farthing in this unlucky journey, and have not a bed nor a chair, ſo I muſt go to

the workhouse.—Oh, it is hard indeed!

CONSTANCE, *(with great agitation.)*

Mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

My child!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, mama, must my poor little Jenny go to the Workhouse?

MRS. LEYSTER.

Perhaps her mother will spare her to you.

MARY THOMSON.

Madam!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Will you leave your child with us?

MARY THOMSON.

My child—Oh, my God!—Oh, madam, can I refuſe any thing to *you?*—But my child!—Ah, madam, *you are a mother!*

MRS. LEYSTER.

I am indeed, and know too well a mother's feelings to try yours any longer. Had you conſented to ſuch a ſeparation I ſhould not have thought well of you, but as you prove to me you are a tender mother, I will truſt you are in all reſpects a worthy character.—But common prudence requires, that before I exert

exert myſelf in your ſervice, I ſhould be convinced your ſtory is perfectly true.

MARY THOMSON.

Certainly, madam.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Then you will not take it amiſs if I ſhould write to the officers of your pariſh for an account of you?

MARY THOMSON.

No, to be ſure, ma'am, you will be quite right to do ſo.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Well, if my enquiries anſwer, I have thought of a plan for you, and Conſtance need not loſe her little favourite Jenny; in the mean time you are very welcome to remain here.

MARY THOMSON.

You are all goodneſs, madam; I moſt humbly thank you. I have nothing to fear from any enquiry, and I ſhall be happy indeed if I ſhould be ſo fortunate as to be placed near you.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Very well, I am at preſent quite ſatisfied with you, and have no doubt I ſhall be always ſo.

MARY THOMSON.

Thank you, Madam.

CONSTANCE.

Here, Mrs. Thomſon, take your little baby, ſhe is almoſt aſleep.

MRS. LEYSTER, *(smiling.)*

The worſt of it is, I am afraid, Mrs. Thomſon, if Jenny ſtays near us, Conſtantia will grow very idle and forget to work.

CONSTANCE.

Oh, no, mama, becauſe I ſhall have her to work for ſometimes.

MARY THOMSON.

You are too good, miſs.

She then left the room with the child, and Mrs. Leyſter ſaid,—" I am pleaſed with this woman; ſhe ſpeaks with great feeling, and ſhe received my notice of ſending to the pariſh officers as ſhe ought to do, without the leaſt appearance of

confuſion or diſpleaſure; ſhe placed herſelf in my ſituation; ſhe ſaw that what I propoſed to do was right; I will write to theſe people directly." She did ſo, and they waited for an anſwer to this letter before they reſolved on any thing.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A FEW days after this, Mrs. Leyſter accepted an invitation to dine with a lady at the town which was about a mile from her houſe: ſhe was deſired to bring Conſtantia with her, as the lady had a daughter about a year younger than ſhe was. They arrived at Mrs. Selwyn's about half an hour before dinner time, but Maria Selwyn did not come in till juſt as they were ſitting down to dinner. Scarcely were they ſeated, when ſhe ſaid, "mama, I want a piece of pudding." "Huſh," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "wait till every

every body elſe is helped, if you pleaſe!" "Oh, but mama," ſaid Maria, "I like to eat my pudding before my meat, and I chuſe to have it now."—"Well then," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "aſk your papa to cut it for you"—"Yes, my dear," ſaid Mr. Selwyn, "I will cut it for you directly"—which he did, to the great ſurprize of Conſtantia, who was quite unaccuſtomed to ſee a little girl behave ſo rudely. Maria Selwyn, however, always did behave ſo; ſhe was quite a ſpoiled child, and ſuffered to do juſt as ſhe liked; ſo ſhe eat enough for two little girls, and of the moſt improper things, aſking for every thing ſhe wiſhed to have, eating extremely faſt, and even putting her knife into the tarts to take out ſome of the fruit; ſhe alſo put her

knife

knife into her mouth inſtead of eating with her fork or ſpoon, and ſhe had ſo many untidy tricks at table, that a very delicate perſon would have been made ſick by her, and every body muſt be diſguſted; ſhe held her knife and fork ſo low, that her hand came upon part of the blade: in ſhort, ſhe was more awkward, and behaved worſe than any child of five years old, who has been uſed to eat with decent people. Mrs. Selwyn indeed ſometimes checked her with, "don't, Maria, upon my word I will ſend you from table;" but as this threat was never put in execution, it was perfectly diſregarded, and Miſs Maria continued to diſtreſs every body by her impertinence and voraciouſneſs. After dinner, when the fruit was ſet upon the table,

table, any one would have ſuppoſed, that ſo far from having eaten an amazing dinner, Miſs Maria had not had any, for ſhe devoured apples, pears and nuts, together with almonds and raiſins and oranges, ſo as perfectly to aſtoniſh the moderate and ſimple Conſtantia. Mrs. Selwyn earneſtly preſſed Miſs Leyſter to take more fruit than ſhe ſeemed inclined to do, and turning to Mrs. Leyſter, ſaid, "I am ſure you will let Miſs Conſtantia eat another orange"—"She is at liberty to do juſt as ſhe pleaſes," replied Mrs. Leyſter; "I have entirely ceaſed to reſtrain her in point of eating for this twelvemonth." Mrs. Selwyn then again begged Conſtantia to eat another orange, but ſhe declined it. When the table was cleared, Miſs Selwyn ſat very quietly and ſeemingly

ſeemingly half aſleep in her place, till Mrs Selwyn told her to take Miſs Leyſter into her dreſſing-room, " which," added ſhe, " you have ſtrewed from one end to the other with your playthings, and even with your ſquirrel's cage, tho' I always tell you I will not have him in my apartment!"—" But, mama," ſaid Miſs Selwyn, " may we not have Roſe to play with us?"—" Yes" anſwered her mother, " if you will behave better to her than you generally do. I dare ſay Miſs Leyſter would be aſhamed to ſee you uſe her ſo ill! Ah, I wiſh you would take pattern by *her!*" The two children then went away, and Miſs Selwyn led her viſitor into her mother's dreſſing-room, which was indeed, as ſhe had ſaid, ſtrewed from one end to the other

other with play things; ſome whole, ſome broken, and ſo various as to afford great amuſement to Conſtantia, who was uſed to have but few. There were no leſs than five dolls, tumblers, children flying a kite, horſes and hounds, a large box with a very pretty ſhow, a magic lanthorn, and a book of prints; on the ſopha a cage with a ſquirrel, and under it a baſket with a cat and three kittens. Conſtantia very eagerly looked over this extenſive collection, but finding the variety diſtracted her attention, ſo that ſhe could examine nothing, ſhe left every thing but the ſhow, which amuſed her very agreeably for ſome time; in the mean while Miſs Selwyn was talking to her about the things, but at laſt, finding her ſo much pleaſed with the

ſhow,

ſhow, ſaid, " dear, what do you like that ugly thing !"

CONSTANCE.

Ugly!– I think it is very pretty indeed!

MARIA.

I uſed to think ſo, but I am tired of it, I hate it now.

CONSTANCE.

How long have you had it?

MARIA.

Oh, a whole fortnight; I ſhall pull it to pieces to-morrow.

CONSTANCE.

Pull it to pieces!—Oh, what a pity, it is ſo amuſing!

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh, but I want the box to put my doll's cloaths in.

CONSTANCE.

A common wooden one would do as well for that.

MARIA.

Yes, I have half a dozen of them about, but they are all filled with rubbiſh. But, la! if you think it is ſo pretty I will give it to you, I don't care a farthing for it!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, by no means—I beg you will not think of it.

MARIA.

Oh, but you ſhall have it!—I will make you have it!

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

I cannot indeed. Mama would be very angry with me.

MARIA.

Why?

CONSTANCE.

Becauſe it looks as if I had perſuaded you to give it me; I beg you will not think of it.

MARIA.

Oh, ſuch nonſence, I ſhall indeed, and if you are ſo nice about taking it from me, I ſhall aſk mama; I'm ſure I don't want it, I ſhall be glad when it is gone. But where is that Roſe, I wonder!—Why don't ſhe come when ſhe knows I

am

am here; how does she think I am to play unless she helps me!

CONSTANCE.

Help one to play!—That is very odd!

MARIA.

Dear, why? Can you play by yourself?

CONSTANCE.

Yes, to be sure!

MARIA.

Well, but who picks up your ball or your shuttlecock?

CONSTANCE.

Myself, certainly, that is half the amusement!

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh, I hate it, it tires one so: I'll ring for this girl; she is kept on purpose to play with me and help mend my cloaths.

She then rang the bell, and while Constantia was looking over the prints, she pulled the cat and her kittens out of the basket, took the kittens in her frock, and then calling the cat, she ran about the room laughing to see the cat's distress at hearing her kittens cry.

CONSTANCE.

Oh don't, Miss Selwyn; poor thing, she thinks you are going to hurt them!

MARIA.

Oh, an old fool!—I would not give a farthing

farthing for her if she will not let me play with them. Here, puss! puss! here's one of your little squawlers! *(holding up a kitten over her head.)* mew?—See how she runs, I wonder what she thinks I shall do with it!

CONSTANCE.

Indeed she is very uneasy, why will you teaze her so?

MARIA.

Oh, it is so droll!

CONSTANCE.

Pardon me, I cannot think it droll to torment any thing.

MARIA.

Dear, what signifies a cat!—I like it, and that's enough.

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

But ſuppoſing you do like it, which I wonder at, do you think you have a right to hurt and teaze the poor creatures?

MARIA.

To be ſure I do!—What do I keep them for, I wonder!

CONSTANCE.

The only uſe I know for a cat is to catch mice.

MARIA.

Oh, but we have no mice.

CONSTANCE.

Well then, if I kept a cat only to

play with her, to be ſure I would not hurt her.

MARIA.

Oh, but I will if I like it, and if you are ſo formal, miſs, you won't make me ſo, I aſſure you.

CONSTANCE.

I am ſorry if you are offended—Come, let us play a little.

MARIA.

What at?—Why don't Roſe come, I'll teach her not to come when I ring for her.

She then rang again, and when Roſe came, who was a pretty decent girl, miſs Selwyn quite ſcolded her, called her names,

names, and at laſt paſſionately ſtruck her! while the poor girl dared not ſo much as anſwer, and Conſtantia vainly ſtrove to call off Maria's attention; for as to reaſoning, *that* ſhe found was quite uſeleſs. At laſt Maria's paſſion abated, and they began to play at ſhuttlecock, but whenever the ſhuttlecock fell on Maria's ſide, ſhe made Roſe pick it up, while Conſtantia, light and active, recovered it in an inſtant, and frequently ſaved its fall; but Maria, oppreſſed by the quantity ſhe had eaten at dinner, found the play fatigue her too much, and ſoon gave it up. They then took the dolls, but here Maria was equally idle; every thing ſhe wanted ſhe made Roſe fetch, and if ſhe found any difficulty immediately gave it to Roſe to do.

Conſtantia was heartily tired of this viſit, for the inſtant ſhe began to take a pleaſure in any thing, Maria was tired of it, or elſe by her continual ſcolding at Roſe put an end to the diverſion. They were both glad when they were called to tea, and the inſtant they came into the room, Mrs. Selwyn ſaid, " my dear child, what is the matter with you, you look as pale as death!"

MARIA.

Oh mama, I have the head-ach.

MRS. SELWYN.

Poor thing, ſhe always has in an afternoon—Sit down by me, my dear, you have tired yourſelf with play—Well, and did you amuſe yourſelf very well?

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh yes, mama—Miſs Leyſter liked my ſhow ſo much, I ſhall give it to her.

MRS. LEYSTER

What is that, Conſtantia!—I hope you did not aſk for it, or expreſs any wiſh to have it given to you?

MARIA

No indeed, ma'am, ſhe only ſaid how pretty it was, and ſo I ſaid I hated it, and ſhould pull it to pieces; and ſhe ſaid it was a pity, and I ſaid ſhe ſhould have it; and then ſhe begged I would not give it her, for fear mama ſhould think ſhe aſked for it, and ſo I told her mama would like her to have it.

MRS. SELWYN.

If Miſs Leyſter will accept of it, after your having offered it ſo rudely, I am ſure I ſhall be very glad to have it ſaved from being deſtroyed.

CONSTANCE, *(bluſhing very much.)*

I thank you, ma'am, but indeed, if you pleaſe, I had rather not have it.

MRS. SELWYN.

Why, my dear.

CONSTANCE.

Becauſe, ma'am, it looks ſo much as if I had admired it on purpoſe to have it given to me.

MRS.

MRS. SELWYN.

My dear, I am pleaſed with your delicacy, but as a preſent from *me* I hope your mama will give you leave to accept it. It was bought but a fortnight ſince, and is really too pretty to be pulled to pieces; which it will be if you do not reſcue it,

CONSTANCE.

I am much obliged to you, ma'am, and to miſs Selwyn—if mama pleaſes—

MRS. LEYSTER.

Since Mrs. Selwyn is ſo kind, my dear, I can have no objection.

MRS. SELWYN.

Very well, then—*(to the footman)*

John, do you give it Mrs. Leyſter's ſervant when he comes. Roſe will bring it down.

During this converſation Maria was eathing cake and drinking coffee, till ſhe was really too ill not to be noticed, as ſhe looked dreadfully. Mrs. Selwyn rang for her own maid to wait on Maria, who with a dreadful ſick head-ach went away, and was obliged to go to bed immediately. In about an hour afterwards Mrs. Leyſter and Conſtance went home, and as they ſat at their ſimple ſupper, Conſtance repeated to her mother the converſation which had paſſed when ſhe and Maria were alone.

CHAP.

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. LEYSTER.

YOU ſee then, Conſtantia, this is an inſtance of what I have often told you, that happineſs depends far more on ourſelves and our own diſpoſition to be contented, than on any outward circumſtances. If any body had told you yeſterday of a little girl who had every plaything ingenuity could invent, full leiſure to amuſe herſelf as ſhe pleaſed, and even a little girl to play with her and wait on her,—perhaps you would have thought ſhe muſt have been happy.

CONSTANCE.

I believe, indeed, mama, I ſhould have thought ſo.

MRS. LEYSTER.

But you ſee now how little theſe things conſtitute felicity. Miſs Selwyn has ſuch an endleſs variety of play-things before her at all hours, that her choice is bewildered, and ſhe becomes tired of all; they ceaſe to give her any amuſement, and ſhe is angry to find that nothing diverts her. To you, who ſee ſuch things very ſeldom, they are a ſource of great entertainment; thus you ſee that by an unlimited uſe the higheſt pleaſures loſe their reliſh, though, taken in *moderation*, they enliven the ſpirits and animate the mind.

mind. Miſs Selwyn is alſo ſo accuſtomed to be waited upon, that ſhe can do nothing for herſelf, and has not even activity enough of mind or body to amuſe herſelf. Tell me, Conſtantia, ſhould you not very much diſlike to find that you wanted ſomebody "to help you play."

CONSTANCE.

Oh, indeed, yes, mama, I was quite aſtoniſhed to hear Miſs Selwyn uſe ſuch an expreſſion!

MRS. LEYSTER.

As to the poor little girl who waits on her, ſhe is indeed much to be pitied; ſhe is truly a ſlave to this little feeble tyrant, who is ſuffered to torment her, without being taught that ſhe is in reality inferior

to the poor girl. Children are really totally dependent on others; if ſervants did not help them they would be miſerably ſituated; it is true ſervants are paid for what they do, but children do not pay them, and they are therefore doubly obliged to the kind parent who accommodates them with the aſſiſtance they want and cannot do without. I believe my memory will furniſh me with the words of a great French author* on this ſubject, let me ſee if you underſtand them. — " A conſiderer l'enfance en elle-meme y-a-t-il au monde un etre plus miſerable, plus a la merci de tout ce qui l'environne, qui ait ſi grand beſoin de pitie, d'amour, de protection, qu'un enfant? Ne ſemble t'il-pas que

* Rouſſeau.

c'eſt

c'eſt pour cela que les premieres voix qui lui ſont ſuggerés par la nature, ſont les ecris et les plaintes; qu'elle lui a donné une figure ſi douce et un air ſi touchant afin que tout ce qui l'approche s'intereſſe a ſa foibleſſe et s'empreſſe a le ſecourir? —Qu'y-a-t-il donc de plus choquant, de plus contraire a l'ordre que de voir enfant imperieux et mutin, commander a tout ce qui l'entoure prendre impudemment un ton de maitre avec ceux qui n'ont qu'a l'abandonner, pour le faire perir?"—And again: "Les domeſtiques ont une véritable ſuperiorité ſur lui en ce qu'il ne ſauroit ſe paſſer d'eux tandis qu'il ne leur eſt bon a rien." Do you underſtand this, Conſtantia?

CONSTANCE.

I think I comprehend the meaning of the

the ſentence, mama, but I do not entirely underſtand the words, will you be good enough to tranſlate it for me?

MRS. LEYSTER.

"If we conſider infancy in itſelf, is there in the world a being more feeble, more miſerable, more at the mercy of all who ſurround him, who has ſo great need of pity, of love, of protection, as a child? Does it not ſeem as if it were for this reaſon that the firſt ſounds which nature ſuggeſts to him are cries and complaints? That ſhe has given him a figure ſo engaging, and an air ſo touching, to the end that all who approach him may be intereſted by his weakneſs, and eager to ſuccour him? What then can be more ſhocking, more contrary to order,

order, than to see a child imperious and mutinous, commanding those who are about him, boldly assuming the tone of a master with those, who have nothing to do but abandon him to cause his destruction? Domestics have a real superiority over him, in that he cannot do without them, while he is useless to them."

CONSTANCE.

Thank you, my dear mama, what a charming lesson this is, as well to me as all other children! I wish Miss Selwyn could hear it.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I should be afraid, my dear, that her mind is too much over-clouded to permit

mit reaſon an truth to make a proper impreſſion upon it!—Another ſource of unhappineſs to her is the unbounded liberty ſhe has of eating whatever ſhe pleaſes in too large quantities. Mrs. Selwyn undoubtedly miſtakes this for one mean of giving her pleaſure, and the conſequence is, ſhe ſpoils her appearance, making her perſon large, heavy, and dull, and what is worſe, ſhe injures her health, and of courſe clogs the activity of her mind.

CONSTANCE.

But mama, is it poſſible any one can take pleaſure in eating too much?

MRS. LEYSTER.

Alas! yes, my dear; and unhappily not only children fall into this deluſion. Many

Many people, whose age and good sense ought to teach them better, will persist in eating such things as disagree with them, or too much of those which are proper. As nothing is more degrading than the latter, which reduces human nature to a level with the "brutes which perish," nay *below* them, for *they* do not eat too much, so is there nothing more absurd or more weak than the former species of folly! What; have we a right to risk our health, our comfort, that of our families and friends, or even perhaps our lives, for the sake of gratifying the taste for a few minutes, a gratification which is so soon forgotten?—Depend upon it, my dear child, from moderation and temperance alone are any lasting pleasures to be derived.

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

But I cannot think, mama, how any perſon can miſtake ſo much as to treat a little girl as Mrs Selwyn treats hers!

MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear child, there is certainly nothing ſo tender as the love of a fond mother. It is hard to deny any thing to a child, which ſeems at the time likely to give it pleaſure; but in a mind regulated by *principle*, this paſſionate fondneſs is repreſſed by the conſideration, that in the end it will render its object unhappy. A good mother is not *ſelfiſh* enough to indulge her own *feelings* by indulging her child, when ſhe knows, as a perſon accuſtomed to reaſon muſt know, that

that a child always indulged is really not ſo happy as one under proper controul, and that the conſequences of unlimited indulgence when this child grows up, will be frightful. The world will not humour her as her mother has done; ſhe muſt then be often thwarted, if ſhe has good ſenſe; her life will be a conſtant ſtruggle between her humours and her reaſon if ſhe has not!—What a character will hers be, at once weak and miſchievous—not knowing how to be happy herſelf, and not ſuffering any other to be ſo! The anxiety and trouble in the firſt, the hatred and miſery in the laſt, might have been ſpared her, had her mother known how to control her! When a mother conſiders that theſe muſt be the conſequences of unbounded indulgence

gence, and that she is accountable to God for the well-being of her child, can she dare to render it wretched and criminal here, and hazard its happiness hereafter!

CONSTANCE.

Oh mama, how sadly are those mistaken who do! But you, you indeed, though you so fondly love me, though you make me so happy, you do not suffer me to do what is wrong; and so good as you are, what must I be if I could wish to do it! If I am wretched and criminal it is my own fault!

MRS. LEYSTER.

God forbid, my dearest, you should ever be either! But we have had a long conver-

converſation, and it is time to go to bed.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, how I love theſe nice chats, they make me ſo happy, and I am always the better for them. When you talk to me as if I was no longer a child, I think I ſhall be aſhamed ever to be childiſh again!

MRS. LEYSTER.

You will not, I hope often be childiſh enough to act improperly; and as to the ſimple manners of childhood, I rather wiſh than not you ſhould retain them. I diſlike extremely a womanly child, who has courage in a large company to aſk queſtions and make pert anſwers.

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, mama, your Conſtance is too idle and too playful not to be a child a long time.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I am not ſorry for that—but get you gone, prater, 'tis bed-time.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The next morning Mrs Leyſter received an anſwer to her letter reſpecting Mary Thomſon, by which ſhe found that her ſtory was perfectly true; and obtained a confirmation of the good opinion ſhe had formed of her. Mrs. Leyſter immediately haſtened to ſet her mind at eaſe, and to impart the plan ſhe had formed for her future comfort. There was a ſmall houſe to be let in the village, and Mrs. Leyſter propoſed that Mary Thomſon ſhould take it; that ſhe ſhould keep a little ſchool to teach children to read

read and work, a thing much wanted in the village, and alſo a little ſhop for pins, threads, tape, &c. by which ſhe had no doubt of her getting a comfortable living. Mary Thomſon received this plan with the utmoſt gratitude; her only doubt was, whether the owner of the houſe would truſt her without ſecurity, and how ſhe ſhould raiſe a little money to buy a ſmall ſtock. "I am not rich," ſaid Mrs Leyſter, "but I can afford without inconvenience to let you have a few pounds to buy a little furniture and ſtock, which you may encreaſe by degrees; if you ſucceed, you ſhall repay me at the end of five years; I will be ſecurity for your firſt year's rent I cannot do all I wiſh for you, but I will do all I can, and you ſhall be welcome

to

to it. You ſhall dine here every Sunday, and Conſtantia will gladly be kind to her little Jenny.

The poor woman had no words to anſwer, but with a truly grateful heart withdrew in tears.

CONSTANCE.

Oh mama! how good you are! how happy you have made her, and me alſo! I ſhall ſee my little Jenny every day, I ſhall call her my child and teach her every thing!

MRS. LEYSTER.

I ſhall be very glad you ſhould take the entire charge of her education. But

tell me, my child, what do you intend to teach her?

CONSTANCE.

I will teach her, mama, as ſoon as ſhe can learn, to read, to ſpell, and to work, afterwards ſhe ſhall learn to write, and I will inſtruct her in drawing and dancing.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Very well—then I ſuppoſe you will finiſh by giving her a good fortune.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, mama, I ſhould be very happy to do ſo, but you know it is not in my power.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Then my child, when you have given her

her the accompliſhments you talk of, what is ſhe to do? Will ſhe be fit for any ſervice?

CONSTANCE.

No, mama, I ſee I am wrong; but tell me then, if you pleaſe, what I ſhall do for her?

MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear, you are not the firſt who has been miſtaken in this matter. Many people have in like manner adopted a child, taken it out of the ſtation in which Providence had placed it, refined its ſentiments, taught it various accompliſhments, and then, either by accident or neglect, have at their death left it to ſtruggle with a world with which it was

unfit to contend. Luxury and refined ideas have already too much pervaded the lower as well as higher classes of people. The notion of equality is an absurd, an unnatural notion. The necessities of man are never so well obviated, as in societies where distinctions of rank and degree are preserved. Are the savage tribes, where every man hunts, cooks, and builds for himself, so happy as those nations where every man has his distinct occupation? God has made a difference in his gifts, both bodily and mental, to different men; and undoubtedly God has always intended a difference in degree, which these gifts will always preserve. For instance, if five men were in an equal situation placed on a desart shore, the wisest would soon become governor,

vernor, the moſt courageous would be their guard, their ſoldier, the ſtrongeſt would be their wood-cutter, their builder, the moſt agile would provide their food, the moſt ingenious (for I diſtinguiſh between ingenuity and wiſdom) would be their mechanic.—But Conſtance, I hardly know if you will underſtand all this ſpeculation; I get a habit of talking to you on all ſubjects, hardly conſidering whether or not they are intereſting to you, and this, from ſome ridiculous opinions I have lately heard, has been much upon my mind*.

CONSTANCE.

I am always happy, mama, when you ſpeak to me; I endeavour to underſtand

* It is to be obſerved Mrs. Leyſter is ſpeaking ſoon after the beginning of the French Revolution.

and to improve from what you say, and I think I comprehend all you have now said.

MRS. LEYSTER.

For common servants, in my opinion it is quite sufficient if they are taught their duty to God and man, and to read it in the Holy Scriptures. For them, especially for women servants, *I* disapprove of learning to write. *My* experience has hitherto taught me, that those who are instructed in that branch of learning more frequently become idle scriblers, prying and curious into the affairs of others, than useful and active servants. I speak with diffidence, however, for many wise and good people have thought otherwise. However, as Jenny well never, I hope,

be

be reduced to the condition of a lower ſervant, I will allow you to teach her to read and ſpell well, to write, and the three firſt rules in arithmetic; plain work of every ſort, but no curious works. And ſhe ſhall be inſtructed by Martha in confectionary and paſtry. I will alſo have her know how to aſſiſt in cooking, in cleaning fine linen, and even doing the leſs laborious work of the houſe, that if any chance ſhould throw her out of our protection, ſhe may not be a poor helpleſs creature, a burthen to herſelf and others. Activity, and the power of providing for herſelf are great virtues in hers, and indeed in *every* ſtation. And very early I doubt not, my dear Conſtance, you will teach her the conſtant uſe of prayer and the firſt principles of

religion. And as she will be often with us, there is not, I hope, much reason to fear but her principles and morals will be good. And now tell me how you like my plan?

CONSTANCE.

Oh, mama, 'tis a thousand times better than mine—I long to begin!

MRS. LEYSTER.

We are looking very forward indeed, for little Jenny may not live to require all these cares.

CONSTANCE.

Oh dear mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Nay, my child, such an idea is not improbable,

improbable, and I hope if it ſhould be realiſed my Conſtantia would be reſigned, and conſole herſelf that her little adopted child was better provided for. But not to dwell on ſo ſad an idea, I muſt declare, that I will not at any time ſuffer the child to be dreſſed with any degree of *finery*, no ribbons, no ornaments of any kind; her dreſs ſhall be neat and clean, but no more; I will never have her taught to forget her origin, or be aſhamed of the lowly garb of her mother.

Here the converſation ended, and omitting many trifling occurrences, I ſhall let a year paſs in which nothing very material happened. Conſtantia grew and improved: little Jenny was to her a conſtant ſcource of amuſement and employ-

ment. She could now talk, and Conſtantia waited impatiently the end of another year, at which time ſhe hoped to begin teaching her to read. Mary Thomſon was placed in the houſe Mrs. Leyſter had promiſed her, and ſucceeded extremely well. The ſpring was now beginning to appear, and Conſtantia ſpent much of her time in her little garden. Her flowers were finer than uſual; ſhe looked forward to their blooming, and drew from air and exerciſe a fine healthy bloom, which proved the goodneſs of her conſtitution. She was now between twelve and thirteen, tall and well made, with a face not indeed beautiful, but extremely pleaſing, becauſe it ſpoke ſweetneſs of temper, good ſenſe, and an affectionate feeling heart; nor was her

appearance

appearance deceitful, for she really possessed all these amiable qualities.

One morning the footman brought Mrs. Leyster a letter; she opened it, saying, "from my sister!"—while Constance went on with her work. "Bless me," said Mrs Leyster, having read it, "what a sad affair is this—I declare I am quite shocked!"—

CONSTANCE.

May I, mama, ask what is the matter?

MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear Constantia, young as you are, I hope and believe I may depend on your prudence. I am a happy mother,

in being able thus early to place a confidence in my child!

CONSTANCE, *(kiſſing her hands with tears in her eyes.)*

Oh, mama, never, never will I abuſe it—my heart promiſes, and you *may* depend upon that heart, which owes not only the power of keeping a ſecret, but every thing it owns of goodneſs to you?

MRS. LEYSTER, *(affected.)*

My dear child.

CONSTANCE.

But mama, I hope—I am not inquiſitive, but—you ſeemed to ſay you would tell me—

MRS. LEYSTER.

What diſturbed me—I will, my dear, indeed

indeed I will read to you your aunt's letter.

To Mrs. Leyster.

My dear sister,

THE ſyſtem of education againſt which you have ſo often argued, I at laſt find to be erroneous. Alicia has deceived my expectations. She has been imprudent, diſingenuous, and unfaithful to her promiſe. Theſe are harſh expreſſions, and if I did not hope the error aroſe rather from habit and want of thought than from her heart, I ſhould be this day a miſerable creature; as it is, I am truly unhappy. Leſt you ſhould be too much alarmed, I will make haſte to diſcloſe the nature of the evil I lament.

When

When Alicia was thirteen, I conſented, at her requeſt, to make her a yearly allowance for clothes and pocket money, upon promiſe that ſhe ſhould never at any time purchaſe any thing without immediate payment. My allowance rather exceeded what had been before expended for her clothes, becauſe I knew it was in vain to expect exact œconomy from ſuch a girl. For the firſt quarter ſhe bought many expenſive trifles, and was in want of many neceſſary articles, ſuch as gloves, ſhoes, threads, &c. I remarked to her this folly, and hoped in the ſecond quarter ſhe had corrected it. Here I allow I was myſelf guilty of a very great error: I ought to have made her ſet down every thing ſhe purchaſed, and have myſelf examined her accounts: but this,

this, depending on her promiſe not to run in debt, I neglected to do. For this laſt quarter I have obſerved her frequently dejected, almoſt always grave, and was in pain for her health. About a month after I had paid her her laſt quarter, not having quite caſh enough in my purſe to pay a bill, I requeſted her to lend me two guineas. I knew it was not a month ſince I had paid her four, and as I had not obſerved ſhe had bought any thing, I concluded ſhe had almoſt the whole by her: ſhe bluſhed exceſſively, and after ſome heſitation ſaid, ſhe had but one guinea left.—" What," ſaid I—" three guineas in a month! and what are you to do till your quarter is again due!"—" Oh, I ſhall not want to buy any thing." " But, " ſaid I, " what have you

you done with it, you have nothing that I know of?"—She ſtill looked exceſſively red and confuſed, and I determined to diſcover what all this meant. I will not tire you with particulars, but tell you at once; ſhe had been led by the example of the Miſs Seymours, who are always in debt, and ridiculed her ſcruples, to run in debt more than ſhe had even yet paid to her millener, ſhoemaker and mantua-maker. I repreſented to her the folly and impropriety of her conduct; ſhe ſaid it had made her exceſſively uneaſy, and after much converſation, I agreed to diſcharge her debts, which ſtill amounted to ſome guineas, on two conditions; one, that ſhe ſhould give up half her allowance for the next year, and to break her intimacy with theſe idle girls,

girls, that she should go into the country for at least half a year. And now, my dear sister, will you exert that affection which I know you feel for me, and take upon yourself for a few months the care of this mistaken girl. If you will, I shall feel myself for ever obliged to you, to whom I shall entrust her with implicit confidence, &c. &c.

Mrs Leyster, however unwillingly to be charged with a young person whose education had been so neglected, yet could not refuse a sister, whom, however different from herself, she sincerely loved. She wrote, therefore, a letter of consent, and Constantia one of invitation to her cousin. Constantia, shocked and surprised as she was, yet made every excuse

cuſe for her couſin candor and good-nature could ſuggeſt, and impatiently waited her arrival; not becauſe ſhe expected any great addition to her own happineſs from it, for her couſin, ſhe was aware, loved purſuits far different from her own, but becauſe ſhe wiſhed to ſooth, by every kind of attention, the diſtreſs ſhe imagined Alicia muſt feel, after having broken her promiſe and offended her mother.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VI.

IN about a week's time Alicia arrived. She was in her perſon a fine ſhewy girl, in her dreſs and air faſhionable, but her countenance wanted that ſoftneſs, thoſe ſmiles and bluſhes which adorned Conſtantia's expreſſive face, and her manner that retiring mildneſs which Conſtantia's exhibited. Conſtantia flew to welcome her, but her ſalute was coldly, even haughtily returned, and to the graver look of Mrs. Leyſter an air of ſullen pride was oppoſed. Alicia ſeemed to feel herſelf aggrieved by the obligation to viſit

visit those she imagined beneath her, to be determined not to find amusement in any thing they could offer her, and to think her fault much too severely punished by the necessity of a residence so unpleasant. Not a word was spoken of the cause of her visit, and Constantia recovering her spirits, which Alicia's coldness had damped, anxiously tried to amuse her. After tea, Constantia asked her cousin how she would like to employ herself.

ALICIA.

It is indifferent to me.

CONSTANCE.

Are you too much tired with your journey to take a stroll in the garden, we shall have yet a light half-hour?

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Yes, it is indeed early to have done tea.

CONSTANCE.

In London, I ſuppoſe, you are later?

ALICIA.

Oh, my [illegible] yes—we have never done tea there till between eight and nine.

CONSTANCE.

Then what hour do you ſup?

ALICIA, *(coldly.)*

That depends on where we are. My mother is early, we ſup before twelve, the Seymours

Seymours never till near one, and if one is at a ball, three or four are uſual hours.

CONSTANCE.

But then you muſt loſe half your day in bed!

ALICIA.

Oh, we riſe as early as other people; it is of no uſe to be up before one's friends are ſtirring.

Conſtantia, perceiving their opinions were ſo different that an augument would be endleſs, again propoſed to walk in the garden, which with a ſort of indolent indifference Alicia agreed to; but this walk afforded neither any pleaſure; Conſtantia vainly pointed out beauties, of which

which Alicia had no idea. The glow of the ſetting ſun, its beams brightened the diſtant view, over which the various ſhades of ſpring were ſpread, its laſt rays ſoftened by degrees from rich purple and gold into the mild grey of twilight, afforded to Alicia no pleaſure, though Conſtantia's heart ſwelled with pleaſure at the ſight. Alicia, perceiving her pleaſure, ſaid with a ſmile of contempt—

Well, it is vaſtly fine to be ſure, but you have ſeen it before, I preſume?

CONSTANCE.

Yes, the ſetting ſun, but ſurely never ſo brilliant; beſides, after the dreary months of winter the view of ſo fine an evening is attended with a thouſand pleaſing ideas.

ALICIA,

ALICIA.

Oh yes, I can conceive that—you must have found the winter pretty dull—to be sure the country is rather more tolerable in the summer!—My God! what in the world do you do in the winter?

CONSTANCE, *(with a smile.)*

Oh a thousand things—I am very happy.

ALICIA.

Happy in the country?—Impossible!

CONSTANCE.

No, my dear cousin, not impossible, since my mother is with me. To hope you can be quite happy here without

yours

yours is abſurd, but I flatter myſelf you will be more ſo than you expect.

Alicia did not very well know what do ſay to this ſpeech; ſhe therefore only with a peeviſh kind of ſhudder remarked that it was cold, and deſired to return to the houſe.

The next morning the woman ſervant who had accompanied Miſs Woodford from London was to return. She came into the parlour to take a letter from Mrs. Leyſter, and then aſked of Miſs Woodford what meſſage ſhe ſhould carry from her to her miſtreſs; but Alicia, diſtreſſed and unhappy, could not anſwer; the tears which ſtood in her eyes, her trembling lips and fading colour

ſhewed her uneaſineſs. Mrs. Leyſter and Conſtantia retired to the window, that ſhe might ſpeak without reſtraint; but ſuddenly exclaiming—"Say—I will write ſoon," ſhe ran out of the room. Conſtantia much affected remained below ſome minutes, and in the mean time, Mrs. Woodford's ſervant got into the carriage and drove away. Conſtantia then followed her couſin; ſhe found her at the window of her room, looking after the carriage in tears. "Ah!" ſhe exclaimed, before Conſtance could approach her, "ſhe will again ſee London and my dear mother!—and I am left in this horrid place!—[redacted]! was it *my* fault!"—She ſtopped, hearing Conſtantia's ſtep, and with an angry tone ſaid, "Have I not even the privi-

lege

lege of being alone?—I am not uſed, Miſs Leyſter, to be thus intruded upon! Ah, I am indeed very little uſed to any thing I can expect to meet with *here!*" Conſtantia, who had been half terrified by her firſt addreſs, now ſeeing her in an agony of grief, approached, and claſping her in her arms ſaid, "My deareſt couſin, I beg you to pardon me if I am an intruder; I came to ſee if I could do any thing to comfort you, but if you wiſh me gone I will leave you. But why ſhould you wiſh it? Suffer me to be your friend; ſuffer me, if poſſible, to make you happy!"—Alicia, ſoftened by her tenderneſs, now felt the coldneſs, the contempt with which ſhe had hitherto regarded her was melting faſt from about her heart; ſhe returned Conſtantia's em-

brace, and shed tears of affection and gratitude on her bosom. For some time neither could speak, but at last Alicia said, "You are very good—better than I either expected or deserved. You know I have much to lament—leave me, pray, my dear, I will soon come down." Constantia instantly left her. In about an hour Alicia came down stairs, her manner in a great measure changed. To her aunt she was more respectful and less cold, and to Constance more affectionate. Still she treated her as a child, and as being much inferior to herself; she still seemed to suppose it impossible that a girl educated in the country could have any accomplishments, or be enabled to form a proper judgment on any subject. To read, except the light publications

of

of the hour, she had never been accustomed. Needle-work, and most of the little ingenious resources of women in general, she dispised as beneath her attention. The fifth morning after her arrival Constantia's drawing master came. Her port-folio and implements were instantly produced. "Bless me, Miss Leyster," said Alicia, "do you draw?" "A little," replied Constance, "but I am very fond of it."—"So am I," said Alicia, "though I have not practised lately; if you will give me a pencil I will try." "Oh, willingly," said Constance, well pleased that she could find any amusement. They then sat down. Constantia's master gave her a subject, and while she began the design, amused himself with making sketches. Alicia began

a bunch of flowers, and all was ſilent. In about half an hour Conſtance aſked her maſter ſome queſtion, and Alicia, caſting her eyes on Conſtantia's drawing, exclaimed, "Bleſs me, Conſtantia, do *you* deſign *figures?*" "Yes," anſwered Conſtantia, "why are you ſo ſurpriſed?" "Oh, becauſe, becauſe, you ſaid you drew but a little."—"Miſs Leyſter is very modeſt, Ma'am," ſaid the drawing-maſter, "but the fact is, I have very little more to reach her.—Very well done, indeed; pray Ma'am look at this figure, 'tis Lavinia, from Thomſon's Seaſons—is not the drapery well done?" "Yes, very well," ſaid Alicia coolly; then riſing, ſhe tore her own performance in two, and threw it into the grate. "Dear couſin," ſaid Conſtantia, "are

you

you tired, why have you torn your drawing?" "Becauſe I was not pleaſed with it," ſaid Alicia gravely.—The drawing time was ſoon expired; Conſtantia's performance was greatly advanced, and ſhe was to finiſh it before her maſter came again. When he was gone, Mrs. Leyſter commended the drawing, and told Conſtance ſhe had given her great pleaſure by her application. "Ah, mama," ſaid Conſtance, "I have no merit in applying to drawing, becauſe I love it ſo much, but if it were diſagreeable to me, I ſhould be over-paid by your being pleaſed. In the courſe of this day Alicia, who fancied her couſin could know nothing becauſe ſhe had been brought up in the country, had the farther mortification of finding ſhe knew

French much better than herſelf, that ſhe had ſome knowledge of Italian, and that ſhe danced vaſtly well. Her converſation alſo with her mother proved her ſo well acquainted with all books proper for her age, and to poſſeſs ſo much knowledge in geography, natural hiſtory, and the hiſtory of her own country, beſides a thouſand little ingenious works, and that young as ſhe was ſhe aſſiſted a great deal in the family management, that Alicia began to take ſhame to herſelf for her. Thus they paſſed a fortnight, and every day added to Alicia's concealed admiration of her couſin; when ſhe ſaw how readily Conſtance employed thoſe hours which *ſhe* found ſo heavy, how happy ſhe was and how agreeable, ſhe began to wiſh herſelf like her. In look-

ing

ing over ſome books ſhe found the Tales of the Caſtle in French, which Conſtance warmly recommended to her peruſal. She took the firſt volume, becauſe ſhe knew not what to do. The ſtory of Delphine arreſted her attention; her heart told her there was ſome ſimilarity between herſelf and Delphine, and between Henrietta Steinhauſen and her couſin; ſhe bluſhed as ſhe read, and the tears ſwelled in her eyes. Mrs. Leyſter obſerved but would not interrupt her: in a few minutes ſhe ſtole out of the room with the book in her hand, and was not viſible again till dinner time; ſhe then appeared to have been weeping, and her manner was grave and dejected. After dinner they walked out. Alicia, who now began to feel real reſpect and

affection, walked with her arm through hers, Mrs. Leyſter ſometimes with them, ſometimes at a little diſtance gathering moſſes and plants which the ſpring produced; for ſuch a long reſidence in the country had made her a ſort of practical botaniſt. They called on Mrs. Thomſon, who received them with grateful reſpect, and little Jenny with rapture. She had been confined by a cold, but was to come the next day to paſs two or three with Conſtantia. While Conſtance was playing with her, Mrs. Leyſter ſaid ſhe and Alicia would ſtep in and ſpeak to Dame Burden—"I will follow you in ten minutes, mama," ſaid Conſtance, and away they went. Dame Burden was a poor old woman, who had been confined many years to her bed with the rheuma-

rheumatiſm. They found her with every thing about her quite clean, and though in great pain, rejoiced by the viſit. "But where," ſaid ſhe, "is my dear young lady—I hope ſhe is not ill—I have not ſeen her this fortnight, and I don't know when ſhe has ſtaid away ſo long from her poor old woman.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Conſtance is very well, ſhe will be here preſently, but we have had this young lady, my neice, with us, and my girl has been engaged with her.

DAME BURDEN.

To be ſure, Madam—I am afraid her goodneſs will make me encroaching at laſt, and yet I try not to be, but the

ſight of my young lady does me good, and I do ſo miſs her when ſhe ſtays away.

MRS. LEYSTER.

But how are you now—are you in leſs pain?

DAME BURDEN.

No Madam, I cannot ſay I am—I don't hope I ever ſhall be—but I try to be patient, and when I cannot ſleep I think, and I know I ſhall not have to ſuffer long.

ALICIA.

But have you been ſo ill a long time?

DAME BURDEN.

Oh dear Miſs, yes, theſe ſeven years; Madam

Madam has tried every thing, and ſent to a great Doctor—but they cannot cure me; ſo I am content as 'tis the will of God, and thank him that he has raiſed me up ſuch good friends, for you know, Miſs, I might have been left to periſh quite—but, Madam, your aunt there is ſo good—Oh, I am bound to pray for her and my dear young lady.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Has Mrs. Thomſon been to viſit you?

DAME BURDEN.

O yes, Madam, ſhe comes every now and then and reads a chapter to me—for now, Miſs, my eyes fail me ſo ſadly I can neither read nor work, but my young

young lady is often ſo good, ſhe comes and reads to me her own ſelf, with her ſweet voice—'tis like hearing the fineſt clergyman, ſhe reads ſo well; and then ſo good-natured withal, ſo courteous, for all ſhe is ſuch a fine ſcholar. Ah, God will bleſs her, for ſhe " is meek and lowly in heart!"

MRS. LEYSTER.

You ſee, my dear Alicia, it is not only by giving money one can do good; Conſtantia is ſo happy as to be ſerviceable to Dame Burden at a very ſmall expence to herſelf.

DAME BURDEN.

Ah, Madam, ſhe is good to me every way; ſhe brings me large pieces of flannel

nel to wrap myſelf in; ſhe makes white-wine whey for me with her own hands, becauſe my girl is not handy. Under God ſhe has been the means of prolonging my life, and what is better, of preparing me to die.

Mrs. Leyſter, affected with theſe artleſs praiſes of her child, wiped her eyes, and Alicia was equally moved and aſtoniſhed. Conſtantia then came in, and after talking a quarter of an hour with her old woman, who was delighted to ſee her, they all returned home, Alicia's heart filled with ſoft emotions and real admiration of her couſin.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VII.

THE next morning Alicia, whose studies and observations the day before had left upon her mind a sort of painful pleasure, who felt unsettled and dissatisfied with herself, uneasy between her newly acquired consciousness of being wrong and her pride, again went to the book-case. The volume she had been reading was up stairs; she was too indolent to fetch it; she therefore took down two *new-looking books*, and read two or three *Dramatic Dialogues**. At last she

* By the Author of this work.

turned

turned to the little Country Viſitor, and there ſhe found confimation that ſhe had been wrong; there ſhe ſaw a character in many reſpects like her own, placed in a ridiculous and ſtriking point of view. She was vexed and diſturbed: ſtill ſhe read on, and when ſhe had finiſhed, ſhe ſtruggled with her tears till ſhe could no longer reſtraint them, and burſting into a fit of crying, ſhe was leaving the room: but Conſtance, who was reading alſo, ran to her, exclaiming, "My dear couſin, what is the matter?" "Nothing, nothing," ſobbed out Alicia. "Nothing!" replied Conſtantia, "and yet you cry ſo!—Oh, Alicia, that cannot be!"—Mrs. Leyſter then approaching embraced Alicia and ſaid, "My dear child compoſe yourſelf, and do not ſtrive

to

to ſuppreſs an emotion which does you ſo much credit! You have been affected by the book you were reading, is it not ſo?

ALICIA.

Oh yes, Ma'am—It is ſo like—I have been ſo abſurd!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Since you feel that, my dear girl, you ſufficiently prove that your heart was not wrong; you were full of prejudices.—You ſaw us with a determination not to love us—we love you, and you cannot help returning our affection. You fancied in the country we could not be happy, or poſſeſs any information; you found yourſelf miſtaken, and your pride was

was hurt; a book, the beſt teacher of a willing heart, has brought conviction to yours. Own your conviction, my dear Alicia, and you will have gained a great victory over your pride and prejudice, for which you are not ſo blameable as your education and companions.

ALICIA.

Ah, Madam, you are very good, you read my heart, I believe, and I am afraid your deſpiſe me; you muſt, for my couſin is ſo good!

CONSTANCE.

Dear, dear Alicia, I am ſure mama loves you.

MRS. LEYSTER.

To own an error is the greateſt proof of

of a good heart and a natural love of virtue. I have not the leaſt doubt but Alicia having done ſo, if ſhe will continue thus open to affection and conviction, will ſoon be a very charming character.

ALICIA, *(kiſſing her hand.)*

How good you are to encourage me! Yes, if you can forgive and love me ſtill, I ſhall, I believe, be happier than I have ever yet been.

MRS. LEYSTER.

We cannot be happy with a ſenſe of an error in the heart, however ſtified by pride. Let us ſit down, and then I will tell my dear niece in what reſpect I think ſhe has hitherto been moſt blameable.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

I ſhall be willing to hear, and I hope to amend.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I have avoided hitherto, my dear, ſpeaking to you on the cauſe of your coming hither: till I could obtain your confidence, till Conſtance could gain your love, we would not enter on the ſubject; hereafter I hope ſhe will be your ſiſter, and I ſhall be your maternal friend.

ALICIA.

Ah, if you will but permit me!

CONSTANCE, *(embracing her.)*

Permit you?—Oh my dear couſin, what joy you give me!

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Henceforth I hope we ſhall be happy in each other. Permit me then, my dear girl, to tell you, you have never ſeemed to me ſufficiently ſenſible of the fault which brought you hither.

ALICIA, *(embarraſſed.)*

In reality, Ma'am—

MRS. LEYSTER.

You do not think it a great one? You did no more than other young people—you always intended to pay your debts, ſo where was the great harm? Is it not thus *you* argue?

ALICIA, *(confuſed.)*

But—you think—nay, perhaps—

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Hear me, my dear child—In the firſt place, the allowance your mother made you was really an ample one; even if it had not been, *ſhe* thought it ſo; ſhe was perfectly aware what your expences ought to be. She had by many years experience learned in what manner it was proper a young woman ſhould dreſs. Believe me, my dear, if with ſixteen guineas a year you could not keep out of debt, you would have been involved if you had had twenty or thirty. To be happy, we muſt learn to live within our income, be it what it may. Not only juſtice requires this, but our own comfort, for nothing can be ſo harraſſing as a conſciouſneſs of owing what we have not to pay.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Oh, I am well aware of that—But I knew I ſhould be able to pay at ſome time or other.

MRS. LEYSTER

Yes, my dear, but conſider, if every body acted thus, thoſe you employ would have no ready money to pay thoſe who work for them, and though the great ſhopkeepers may not be materially hurt, yet thoſe who muſt have their money from day to day would ſtarve if they were not paid. Add to this, you pay more than you ought to do for every article, and you are entirely precluded giving any thing in charity.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Pardon me, my dear Ma'am, I always gave a little out of what I had.

MRS. LEYSTER.

But what *right* had you to do that? you owed more than you poſſeſſed, therefore you had really no money of your own, and what pretenſion have you to give away that of other people? You feel this mortifying, but is it not juſt?

ALICIA, *(in a low voice.)*

I believe ſo, indeed!

MRS. LEYSTER.

It is indeed mortifying to feel that one *depends* entirely on the *forbearance* of

 others;

others; who if they pleaſe may expoſe us to every body, as a perſon who wants juſtice ſo much as to contract debts they cannot pay!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, Mama!

ALICIA.

Nay, I deſerve it all—I feel that I do!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Believe me, my dear Alicia, that my earneſt manner ariſes only from my ſincere wiſh to convince you of your error. That you were not worſe than your companions does not *juſtify* you, thought it *condemns* them. But to enforce what I ſay, ſuffer me to tell you a little

little ſtory of which I know the truth. When I was in London, juſt after my marriage, a young friend and myſelf were paſſing through a narrow ſtreet in my carriage, when a little boy ran directly under the horſes feet; providentially I ſaw him time enough, by pulling the check, to ſave him from being much hurt. I inſtantly jumped out, and enquired of two or three people the accident had drawn together whoſe child he was; they pointed out a mean looking houſe where they ſaid his parents lived, and my young friend and I went in, followed by the footman carrying the child, who though meanly dreſſed was clean and pretty. A young ſickly looking woman, who was rocking a cradle with her foot, while her hands were buſily

employed in making a gown, roſe with ſurpriſe to receive us, but ſhe was ſadly alarmed when ſhe ſaw the child pale and diſordered. We ſoon compoſed her mind, and ſhe thanked us in terms above her ſtation. I promiſed to call again the next day to enquire after the child, and after ſlipping a guinea into his little hand, we went away. The next day I did not fail to call, and found the child quite recovered. The young woman's thanks and manner of ſpeaking were modeſt and intereſting; there was an air of cleanly poverty about them, and ſhe ſeemed ſickly. I made a few enquires about her way of life, and as ſhe was communicative, I eaſily learned the following particulars. She had been brought up genteelly, but was reduced by her father's death

death to the neceſſity of getting her own bread. A relation had apprenticed her to a mantua-maker, and when her time was out ſhe ſet up for herſelf, and ſoon obtained ſufficient buſineſs to ſupport her, eſpecially by the employment of two very young ladies of quality, whoſe mother at that time ſuperintended their cloaths. She ſoon after married a young man who was journeyman to a great ſilk-mercer,, and they went on very well till after the birth of their firſt child; then theſe two young ladies I ſpoke of before having obtained an *allowance* from their mother, began not to be ſo punctual in their payments. Still Mrs. Martin worked for them. She was frequently ordered to buy linings and trimmings of various ſorts, for which ſhe paid, but was

not paid again. The perſon who employed her huſband failed, and went off ſome pounds in his debt, and as ſhe had now a long bill on her faſhionable cuſtomers, ſhe ventured the next time they ordered ſomething, to hint ſhe ſhould be glad of a little money. Promiſes were the reply, promiſes which were never kept. Her affairs began to get deranged, as her huſband was out of employment, and was afflicted with a conſumptive complaint which prevented his getting any. At this unfortunate time poor Mrs. Martin lay in of her ſecond child, and their little ſtock of money was conſequently all expended. She knew the ſum her two principle cuſtomers owed her would ſupport them till ſhe could get again to work, ſhe ventured there-

therefore to ſend a note by her huſband to entreat the payment of it. But her huſband returned with the ſad intelligence that only one ſervant was left in the houſe, and the whole family was gone to Spa for a twelvemonth! This was a terrible ſtroke! They were ſlightly indebted to their landady, and a few other perſons, theſe debts they had no means of diſcharging but by ſelling ſome of their furniture. The woman with whom they lodged took alarm, and at laſt informed them ſhe had let her apartments to "people who would not be obliged to ſell their furniture to pay her!" They were therefore under the neceſſity of removing to the poor houſe where I found them, and where it was too much trouble to ſome of her fine

cuſtomers to come.—" A mantua-maker in ſuch a vulgar place!—They were ſorry for her, but henceforth they ſhould employ Madame A——r, Mademoiſelle B——, who lived in ſuch a ſquare or ſtreet!" The poor young woman, harraſſed and hardly recovered from her lying in, could now ſcarcely get work enough to find them neceſſaries.—I am afraid, my dear, I tire you with my long ſtory.

CONSTANCE.

O no, mama, indeed!

ALICIA, *(ſighing.)*

No, it does not *tire* me!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Her huſband was now in hopes of getting

ting a place in an eminent ſilk-mercer's ſhop. I enquired the name of the ladies who had gone away in their debt, and found I had a ſlight acquaintance with their family. I then, after making enquiries which confirmed the truth of their ſtory, and the good opinion I entertained of them, drove to Mr. —— the ſilk-mercer's, with whom I had laid out a conſiderable ſum on my marriage. I did not leave him till I had obtained his promiſe to employ poor Martin with a comfortable ſalary. I afterwards wrote in my own name to one of the young ladies at Spa, and after ſeverely cenſuring their unjuſt conduct, I told them if the money was not remitted within a certain time, I ſhould write an account of their behaviour to their mother. The money

was almoſt immediately remitted to me, with a civil letter, and many attempts at excuſes. With this ſum I adviſed Mrs. Martin to remove to a genteel part of the town: I gave her my own cuſtom, and recommended her to many others. I had the pleaſure of ſeeing my endeavours ſucceed, and with very little expence or trouble to myſelf, I had the happineſs of reſcuing theſe poor people from miſery, and ſeeing them in a flouriſhing way. Poor Martin's health was recovered, and they were both till their deaths, which happened ſoon after each other within theſe four years, the moſt grateful, induſtrious creatures I ever knew. The boy is now in the ſea ſervice, and the girl with a milliner in Bond-ſtreet, and both likely to do well.

I ſee,

I see, my dear Alicia, I need not impress this strongly on your mind. You feel how unjust must be that conduct, which may so easily involve a whole family in ruin. Besides, if this unhappy propensity to living beyond your income grow up with you, when you are your own mistress and perhaps have the care of a family, the mischief will become more extended: inevitable ruin to yourself and your family must ensue, for no income can equal the profuseness of an extravagant, careless woman. Besides, by your necessarily large dealings you involve numbers in your ruin. A large tradesman stops payment, because his customers do not pay him, and instantly half a dozen small families are reduced to absolute want; they again draw in

others, and there is no saying where the mischief will end.

ALICIA.

Ah, Madam, I am indeed fully convinced. I will immediately write to my mother and tell her so! Yet had she—had she but inspected my accounts—

MRS. LEYSTER.

There she herself allows she was wrong—but Alicia consider—It was her *dependence* on *your promise* made her thus secure!

ALICIA *(starting up.)*

I will write to her this instant—I will entreat her to pardon me—I will own that I am struck to the heart—that my punish-

puniſhment is juſt—for though I ſubmitted, I never thought it ſo before!—But why do I ſay puniſhment—I am convinced this viſit, which I thought ſuch a misfortune, will prove the happieſt event of my life.

CONSTANCE.

I am ſure it is of mine, ſince inſtead of a couſin whom I had never ſeen, I hope I have now a friend whom I ſhall always love.

ALICIA, *(looking at Mrs. Leyſter.)*

Am I worthy to be her friend?

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yes, my dear girl; you have an excellent heart, and that is the great ſecurity for all.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Ah then, embrace me, my dear couſin, my friend, my ſiſter!—Now, for the firſt time in my life, I know what friendſhip is!

MRS. LEYSTER, *(wiping her eyes.)*

It is true. Virtue alone is the ſure baſis of friendſhip. Without it we may form intimacies, connections, and even unworthy confidences, but friendſhip can only ſubſiſt between thoſe who love virtue!

Alicia then withdrew to write to her mother, which ſhe did in the tendereſt and moſt penitent terms. She ſhed many tears over her letter, but they were not tears of reſentment and vexation, they

they flowed from a heart convinced of its errors, and tasting for the first time all the sweetness of candor and ingenuousness, and as such they at once purified and gratified her feelings.

After this tranquillity was restored at Fair Lawn, and Constantia and Alicia became inseparable companions. The more Alicia knew of her cousin, the more she discovered that far from being her superior, she was really greatly below Constance in every desirable acquirement. After having received an answer from her mother full of pardon and affection, she wrote again, begging permission to take lessons of drawing with Constantia, which was readily granted, and she set about improving in it with the

the more alacrity, becauſe ſhe was really fond of the art. Inſtead of contemptuouſly declining, ſhe now endeavoured to find pleaſure in the ſimple but natural and uſeful purſuits of her couſin; and though her mind could not all at once gain that energy which made them ſo delightful to Conſtantia, yet by degrees they became agreeable to her. As ſhe became more acquainted with books, and particularly the poems of Thomſon and Cowper*, a thouſand natural beauties ſhe had before overlooked, now charmed her eyes and gratified her heart: and learning to be charitable from thoſe ſhe was with, ſhe found that to ſacrifice an expenſive ornament or piece of millinery, by giving the money they would have

* See Thomſon's Seaſons and Cowper's Taſk.

coſt

coſt to the poor, gave her more pleaſure than ſhe could have received from wearing them. Her perſon improved by exerciſe and the new virtues of her mind, her manners acquired a ſoftneſs and modeſty, and in three months time ſhe would ſcarcely have been known. Mrs. Leyſter, however, obſerved, that ſhe had not loſt, and that Conſtance had acquired one of Alicia's bad habits; ſhe waited for a proper opportunity to rebuke her for it, and it occurred. They ſat at work one morning; Conſtantia riſing haſtily tore her gown (which was confined by Alicia's chair) and inſtantly exclaimed—"Oh my God, couſin, you have torn my gown!"

MRS. LEYSTER.

Conſtantia!

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

Mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Did I hear you right?

CONSTANCE.

What, mama!—I don't know what you mean!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Is it poſſible that a habit ſo lately acquired can have gained upon you ſo much, that you are not ſenſible when you do it?

CONSTANCE.

No, mama, I know now what you mean.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yes, Conſtantia.—Without any inducement, affected by a moment's ſurprize, by a thing of no ſort of conſequence, you call eargerly upon that great, that ſupreme Being, whoſe name ought never to be invoked but with ſenſations of awe and reſpect, who has expreſsly forbidden you "to take his name in vain," or even without cauſe to ſwear "by the Heaven which is his throne, or the earth which is his footſtool!" Do you not bluſh, Conſtantia, at uſing on ſuch an occaſion a name ſo ſacred?

(CONSTANCE, *with emotion.*)

Mama—I was not aware—I hope I ſhall never do it again

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I hope you never will. Even if it were not extremely wicked, which it is, there is ſomething ſo bold, ſo unfeminine in a woman's uſing ſuch expreſſions, that I never can bear to hear it. My dear Alicia bluſhes and looks abaſhed. I own, my dear, I have obſerved this ill habit in you with great pain, and only waited a favourable moment to tell you of it. Conſtantia has learned it of you, you I ſuppoſe learned it of your London friends. I know too many young women think nothing of ſuch appeals to the Deity, nor of other improper exclamations. They think, I believe, that it gives them an air of faſhion, whereas in reality the loweſt of the people are the greateſt

greateſt offenders in this way. Theſe young ladies alledge that they mean nothing by it; but what then, can they not expreſs their ſurpriſe by more decent exclamations, and without breaking an abſolute *commandment?* Some of them, I am afraid, ſeldom hear the name of God, except when it "is taken in vain." For them I feel extreme pity, for their inſtructors utter indignation. But for religious young women, thoſe who know and reverence the "Father of all," to uſe ſuch expreſſions, is really ſhocking. And if for every idle word we ſhall be called to account, as the Scripture aſſures us, how will thoſe anſwer who wantonly and wilfully are perpetually taking the name of "God in vain?" Correct both of you, I entreat you, this terrible

cuſtom,

cuſtom, and let me never more have occaſion to reprove you on this ſubject.

Lectures like this on many errors Alicia frequently received, but delivered with ſuch ſweetneſs of manner, ſuch ſtrength of reaſoning, ſhe could not be diſpleaſed with them; they every day became leſs and leſs neceſſary, and by the end of the ſix months which ſhe had promiſed to ſpend in the country, ſhe was every thing that could be wiſhed. Mrs. Woodford came at the end of that time to ſee her ſiſter and niece, and to fetch home her daughter; but Alicia, no longer preſuming, conſcious of her former deficiencies, and fearful of loſing what ſhe had acquired, begged to remain another half year in the country,

at

at the expiration of which Mrs. Leyſter and Conſtance promiſed to return with her to London, To this Mrs. Woodford readily agreed, and delighted with the improvement of her daughter and the goodneſs of Conſtantia, whom ſhe had not ſeen for many years, ſhe ſtaid a month with them and then returned to London. Conſtance had now the pleaſure of ſeeing her little Jenny old enough to profit by her leſſons, and the child grew and improved as much as ſhe could deſire. When Alicia returned to London, Mrs. and Miſs Leyſter went with her. They remained ſome weeks in Town, enjoying in moderation the pleaſures it affords. They then went back, leaving the grateful Alicia with her happy mother, with whom ſhe ſtill remains, tho' a fre-

a frequent interchange of visits is kept up between the inhabitants of Fair-Lawn and Mrs. and Miss Woodford. The latter is become one of the most amiable young women of the age; she and Constantia are universally beloved in the circle of their acquaintance; and both gratefully and constantly allow, that they owe all their happiness to the kind instructions of Mrs. Leyster, and a residence in the country, which has taught them that justice and moderation are the securest means of obtaining true happiness.

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